



The Order

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The newly elected Executive Committee, with a number of senior members on board giving advice, has embarked on a 3 year plan to move the Singapore Association towards more ambitious projects to fulfil our mission of "Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum". These projects will be over and above our usual activities.

One of these is the planning and execution of the Inaugural Asia Pacific Camp for Disabled Youth. Planning had begun 6 months ago but is now moving forward in earnest with program managers assigned and executing across the various functions such as fund raising, programs, logistics and publicity.

The last 6 months also provided us with joyful pride when our very own past president Michael Khoo was Conferred the Diploma of the Order of Pro Merito Melitensi.

30 Jun 2016

A MILESTONE CELEBRATION FOR PAROCHIAL HOUSE OF ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

On a sunny afternoon on 30th June 2016, nine members from the Singapore SMOM led by President Rose Lu attended the ceremony celebrating the Parochial House of St Joseph's Church being gazetted for conservation. The occasion was graced by Guest of Honour, Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister for National Development. The 104 -year-old three storey church building which once served as the headquarters of the Portuguese Mission in Singapore was chosen by the Urban Redevelopment Authority to be the latest addition to the list of conserved buildings in Singapore.

Fr Alex Chua, Rector of St Joseph's Church, said that "It is an honour for the Church to have its Parochial House recognised and conserved for its architectural, historical and social heritage". Fr Ignatius Yeo, the Church's former Rector said that the Parochial House will be more accessible to the public in the future. For a start, three guided tours for public viewing were organised on 2 July 2016. Fr Yeo also added that the Church is exploring the possibility of establishing a permanent gallery exhibit at the Parochial House on the history of St Joseph Church along with a suggestion of opening an eatery which employ workers with disabilities as part of the Church's social mission.

The occasion also saw the launch of our Knight James Boss's book, 'Journey of 190 Years: A History of the Eurasian Catholic Community in Singapore'. The event ended with a reception for all invited guests.

29 August 2016

FEAST DAY MASS COMMEMORATING THE BEHEADING OF OUR PATRON ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ON 29 AUG 2016

We celebrated the above Feast Day by gathering at Church of Sts. Peter and Paul at 6.30 pm on 29 August 2016 for Mass. Fr Edward Lim our Magistral Chaplain was the celebrant and we were much cheered by the presence of his grace AE Nicholas Chia our Conventual Chaplain. Fr Edward reminded all in his homily of the need to reflect on whether we are practicing the tenets of the Christian faith. He made a poignant observation that while doing good requires practice, it also takes practice to do evil. Just as the most evil Herodias did not hesitate to act by manipulating Salome her daughter and taking advantage of the hapless Herod to achieve an evil end, Fr Edward exhorted us to be ready like St John the Baptist for action, ever ready to defend our Faith, in the midst of an evil world. So emboldened, Mass ended with us paying tribute to our Lady in the strains of the recessional hymn, 'Salve Regina'.



22 - 25 August 2016

ORDER OF MALTA 6TH ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, SEOUL

Preamble

The Order of Malta 6th Asia Pacific Conference was yet another fruitful meeting. Representatives from the Grand Magistry, Malteser International, CIOMAL, Global Fund for Forgotten People, Australia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Thailand and Oceania attended the 4-day conference held in Seoul.

The conference coincided with the seeding of the Order of Malta in the fertile soil of Korea. The investiture of eleven postulants marked the birth of the Order in South Korea.

Opening Remarks by Grand Chancellor and Grand Hospitaller

The opening remarks by the Grand Chancellor and Grand Hospitaller set the tone for the conference and served as a reminder of the mission of the Order.

Members need to be mindful that they share the same vocation to nurture, witness and protect the faith, and serve the poor and sick. Besides the ongoing efforts to strive together for solidarity, justice and peace based on the teaching of the Gospels, members need to be actively engaged in the works of the Order.

Hands-on work is crucial but it is the way we carry out the works that defines us – serving humbly, joyfully and lovingly.

When selecting charitable works, it is important to see the situation through the eyes of those in need. It is only then that we learn what they really need rather than what we think they need.



Works of the Order of Malta in Asia Pacific

Reports on regional activities from the various associations, delegations, the Order's agencies and the Grand Magistracy's overview of the Order's international activities were informative and enlightening.

Every association and delegation is actively engaged in meaningful and dynamic projects and activities serving the needy and sick in their country. An exciting new project that was highlighted is the Australian Association's initiative in Timor-Leste, the Order of Malta Clinic Dili, Timor-Leste.

The objective of the clinic is to provide basic primary out-of-hospital care and education to the people of Timor-Leste. The facility will operate within the boundaries of teachings and charism of the Catholic faith and Order of Malta. The setting up of the clinic is near completion. In view of its funding needs, an appeal of support was made to all Associations and Delegations.

Another project that tugged at the heartstrings of several present is the wonderful work of CIOMAL with lepers and leprosy-affected families in Cambodia. Its efforts to detect, treat and rehabilitate demand grit and commitment, not mentioning passion and a self-forgetting spirit. Its contribution to alleviating leprosy in Cambodia is phenomenal. CIOMAL's immediate mission is to make leprosy an issue of the past in Cambodia.

Future expansion in the Asia Pacific region was also discussed. Work is underway for a few countries.

Conclusion

The conference ended on a high note with the investiture of 11 Korean members at the Myeongdong Cathedral.

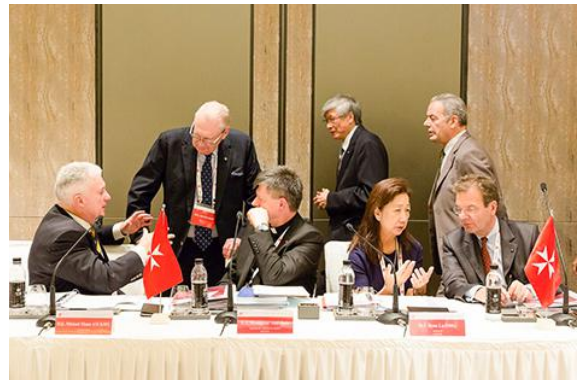
In closing, I wish to share an excerpt from the closing speech by Confrere Silvano Park, President of the Korean Delegation:

"It is such an irony that at one corner of society, people have food in excess and at the other corner, there are still many people in need, starving and fighting a battle in life.

There are works to do Whether the journey becomes rough or smooth, and whatever we achieve through the journey, we all know why we are here and what we need to do".

This sentiment resonated with the participants at the conference by virtue of the fact that members of the Order are called and, at the investiture, made a commitment to nurture, witness and protect the faith, and serve the poor and sick.

Rose Lu



8 October 2016

WORKING RETREAT

On Saturday, 8 Oct 2016, 25 Knights, Dames and Associates gathered at the Waterfront Grand Copthorne Hotel to renew their commitment to the Order and chart the way forward for the Singapore Association in a full day working retreat.

The retreat was kick-started by Fr Ignatius Yeo who kindly made time for the event. In his exhortation entitled, 'Mission To Live What We Celebrate', he reminded all that holistic Catholic spirituality consists of the 3 concentric circles of liturgy at the core, followed by prayer and spirituality, amplifying through the 'Paschal Spiral' to become increasingly more Christ-like. He also inspired all to initiate others into the Christian identity and by being initiated into the sacred, we ourselves go out into the secular again to bring light to the world.

Mr Andrew Sng, our retreat facilitator followed up with a strategic prioritization session based on our mission and vision statements with 2 breakout sessions to deliberate on our works to decide which are the ones to do more or less of. The second session delved deeper into the viability and potential obstacles that may be encountered. The 3 groups then individually shared the outcomes of their group discussions. EXCO will further deliberate on the retreat input in greater depth before formulating the definitive medium to long term plan for the Association. The retreat concluded with mass celebrated by Fr Ignatius Yeo at 5 pm.



CONFERMENT OF DECORATION AND DIPLOMA OF THE ORDER OF PRO MERITO MELITENSI ON CONFRERE MICHAEL KHOO

His Most Eminent Highness the Prince and Grand Master and the Sovereign Council of the Order of Malta granted to Confrere Michael Khoo, Knight Grand Cross of Magistral Grace, the Grand Cross of the Order pro Merito Melitensi on 10 Jun 2016. The Decoration and the Diploma was presented by Dame Rose Lu, President of the Singapore Association to Confrere Michael Khoo in a special ceremony at mass on 8 Oct 2016. The Order pro Merito Melitensi is awarded by Decree of the Sovereign Council and by motu proprio (Latin for "on his own impulse") of the Grand Master. We congratulate Confrere Michael Khoo for being accorded the award in recognition for the implementation of the Institutional purposes of the Order. This award is usually made on 2 February (Candlemas, commemorating the presentation of Jesus at the Temple which is the 40th day of the Christmas/Epiphany period); on 24 June (Feast of St. John the Baptist, Patron of the Order); or on 13 October (feast of Blessed Gerard, founder of the Order).



23 October 2016

SMOM ST. THERESA'S HOME OUTREACH

On 23rd October, we started the annual event by joining the residents at the 10am Mass which was celebrated by Fr Augustine Tay. To our delight, our Conventual Chaplain, Archbishop Emeritus Nicholas Chia, a convalescent in St Theresa's Home was present.

After Mass, the residents adjourned to the Hall for a sumptuous lunch attended to by members and friends of the Order who served and helped to feed them. AE Chia said grace before meal and attended the entire program.

About 70 students from the School of Dance aged 3 - 15 performed several numbers including Vietnamese cultural dance, ballet and modern dance in their colourful costumes accompanied by catchy music, playing all-time favourites like Amazing Grace and Abba's 'Mama Mia'; they had the audience enthralled. Despite most of the residents being on wheel-chairs, encouraged by nursing staff who joined the dancers, they managed to sway sportingly during the fast dances to the spritely performance put up by these young students who practiced hard and sacrificed their weekend to bring joy to the residents.

After dessert and gustatory satiation, an encore was requested by the residents for a similar performance next year as they enjoyed it so much. Our members and friends who were there to help had a most fulfilling time.



NOTABLE KNIGHTS SERIES – SAINT NICASIVS



St Nicasius was born in Sicily in 1135 of the noble Kameti family, later known as the de Burgio family. His grandfather, Emir of Agrigento and Enna, was of Arabic descent. In 1086, Count Roger de Hauteville, the youngest son of Tancred conquered Sicily which was previously under Muslim rule. St Nicasius' grandfather negotiated the terms of surrender after staging a prolonged resistance from Enna. His entire family was baptised in 1088 and was granted the lands of Burgio with resultant change of family name to 'de Burgio'.

St Nicasius' father Robert de Burgio then married a noble woman Aldegonda from the conquering family's House of Hauteville. St Nicasius was one of 4 children from this marriage. His brother Ferrandino and himself subsequently embraced the religious life as members of the Order of Malta. They took 4 vows, that of poverty, chastity, obedience, and to "stay in military arms". In 1185, the 2 brothers answered the call of the Grand Master, Roger de Moulins, and ventured to Jerusalem to defend pilgrims and tend to the sick in the Order's infirmary.

In 1187, Sultan Saladin invaded Holy Land. In the battle at Hattin, Ferrandino along with the Grand Master Roger de Moulins were killed and St Nicasius was captured. When St Nicasius refused to convert to Islam, he was beheaded in the presence of Sultan Saladin, dying as a martyr.

Veneration of St Nicasius started in Caccamo in Sicily because of nearby de Burgio family estates and he became the patron saint of the city in 1625. A confraternity was formed in his name in 1596 and His Holiness St John Paul II in 2001 designated July 1 as the feast day of St Nicasius.

15 DECEMBER 2016

SMOM THANKSGIVING MASS

The above Mass was celebrated by Fr Edward Lim on 15 December, 2016 in Mt. Alvernia Chapel at 6 pm. It was attended by twenty members, associates and spouses. We were happy to see Archbishop Emeritus Nicholas Chia looking well at the Mass.

In his homily Fr Edward highlighted the role of our patron saint, St John the Baptist in the overall salvific plan of God. Thereafter we proceeded to the Silk Restaurant at Singapore Island Country Club for a fellowship dinner.





Newsletter team from L-R: Andrew, Edward, Ernest, Greg & Donald

THE ORDER OF MALTA INAUGURAL ASIA PACIFIC SUMMER CAMP FOR DISABLED YOUTH

Preparations are well under way for this inaugural camp for disabled youth. It will be held from 8 – 11 June 2017 in the Singapore Sports School. Some 100 participants – disabled youths aged 18-35 and their caregivers will come together for 4 days of fun and laughter. The exciting programme lined up includes several activities such as scuba diving, skydiving at iFly, and horse-riding. If not for this camp, the disabled youths may otherwise never have the opportunity to participate in these activities. Apart from the presence of members of the Grand Magistracy from Rome, we are also expecting representatives from the SMOM Associations in the Asia-Pacific region.

The various sub-committees have been hard at work led by the organising committee chaired by Dame Rose Lu, President of the Singapore Association. Of note will be the Fundraising Gala Dinner to be held on 29 April 2017 Saturday in Pan-Pacific Hotel. We hope to raise at least \$100,000 SGD.

All donations are welcomed; crossed cheques made in favour of "Order of Malta (Singapore)", with 'Camp for Disabled Youth' written on the reverse may be mailed to: 'The Secretariat, Order of Malta (Singapore), 16 Raffles Quay #41-07, Hong Leong Building, Singapore 048581.

2017 Upcoming Events:

Thursday, 12th January

New year mass & dinner
Venue: Mt. Alvernia Chapel
Time 6:00 pm

Friday, 20th January

CNY Outreach
Venue: Assisi Hospice
Time: 5:30

Wednesday, 8th February

SMOM Community meeting
Venue: Mt. Alvernia meeting room
Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wednesday, 12th April

SMOM Community meeting
Venue: Mt. Alvernia meeting room
Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday, 29th April

GALA Dinner - Camp Fundraising
Venue: Pan Pacific Hotel
Time: 7:00 pm

Thursday, 8th - 11th June

APAC Camp for Disabled Youth
Venue: Singapore Sports School

Wednesday, 14th June

SMOM Community meeting
Venue: Mt. Alvernia meeting room
Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday 24th June

Mass for Birth of St. John the Baptist
Celebrant: Fr. Edward Lim
Venue: Mt. Alvernia Chapel
Time 6:00 pm